

Town of Cheswold
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2013
Cheswold Fire Hall Conference Room

- I. Chairperson Dennis Coker called the meeting to order 7:05 pm**
- II. Salute the Flag**
- III. Moment of Silence was observed**
- IV. Proper Posting of Meeting was confirmed**
- V. Roll Call of Commissioners to ensure a quorum**

Present

Martha Scott

Albert Lambertson

Dennis Coker

Absent

Barry Jones

Chairperson Coker acknowledged a quorum has been confirmed. The presence of Councilperson Callendar and Mayor Tinari was acknowledged at the meeting. Chairperson Coker thanked Ruthann Purchase for volunteering her time to record the meeting minutes.

VI. Review of Agenda

Chairperson Coker requested an informal discussion of the proposed Torbert sub-division be added to the agenda. Commissioner Lambertson made a motion to amend the agenda to include an informal discussion of the proposed Torbert sub-division; Commissioner Scott seconded. Motion was unanimously carried.

VII. Review Minutes of Previous Meetings

Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the December 13, 2012 meeting. Commissioner Lambertson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; Commissioner Scott seconded. Motion was unanimously carried.

Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the January 10, 2013 meeting. Commissioner Lambertson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; Commissioner Coker seconded. Motion was unanimously carried.

Before moving to the discussion items of the agenda Chairperson Coker requested suggestions for facilitating a more efficient process or meeting schedule for planning commission work. With the complicated issues before the Commission it was suggested there may be a need for some 'special meetings' to help reduce the work load. Chairperson Coker expressed a feeling of 'falling behind'. Commissioner Scott endorsed the 'special meeting' suggestion as long as there was adequate notice and the 'special meeting' did not conflict with the League of Local Government's meeting held the last Thursday of each month. The topics for 'special meetings' included the M1 Zoning issue, fee revision schedule and the Land Use Ordinance revisions. It was agreed the Commission would consider 'special meetings' in an effort to reduce the work load.

VIII. Discussion of Fee Schedule Revision; update

Chairperson Coker provided an Excel spreadsheet comparing the fee schedules of similar municipalities deemed to be comparable. A brief explanation of the spreadsheet format permitted the Commissioners to understand the comparisons.

Councilperson Callendar commented that land development fees and building permit fees should be on separate schedules. Chairperson Coker said the spreadsheet was set up separating the land development fees and the building permit fees.

Chairperson Coker brought to the Commission's attention the need to uniformly compare units of measurement because the different municipalities were not consistent in this respect. Some calculating was necessary to get an 'apples to apples' comparison. It was suggested there may be a need to revise Cheswold's fee format when the comparison study was complete. The Commission was also informed the engineering/consultant fees are typically placed in an escrow account and returned if not utilized. If the escrow account is not adequate to cover the engineering/consultant billing then the client is billed for the difference. Chairperson Coker advised the Commissioners to compare the minimum and maximum line item fees.

Commissioner Lambertson asked if the Town had a current fee schedule from Tom Wilkes of Remington, Vernick & Beach. Councilperson Callendar said she would request a revised schedule from Remington, Vernick and Beach.

Chairperson Coker mentioned the fee schedule can be as simple as having an administrative fee with a note, 'Plus Engineering Costs' or 'developer pays all engineering fees'.

Councilperson Callendar reiterated the priority status of revising the Town's fee schedules.

Commissioner Lambertson said he would like to review the fee schedules of Kent County and the City of Dover. Commissioner Lambertson said he would obtain those schedules and make them available. It was agreed to include Kent County and City of Dover fee schedules for comparison in our study.

IX. M-1 Zoning District Discussion; update

This agenda item will remain tabled until the Commission receives an opinion from the Town's solicitor.

X. Added Agenda Item; Torbert sub-division

Chairperson Coker explained there may be a proposal to sub-divide the property on Main Street recently impacted by fire which required the demolition of the existing residential structure. A packet of information was provided to each Commissioner so they could familiarize themselves with the details of the proposal. Questions to be answered include does the proposal comply with the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Ordinance. Commissioners were advised to review the check list included in the informational packet.

XI. Motion to Adjourn

Commissioner Lambertson made the motion to adjourn at 8:58 pm; seconded by Commissioner Scott. Motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis J. Coker, Chairperson
Cheswold Planning Commission